



THE CENTER FOR  
FOOD INTEGRITY

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Contact:

Mark Crouser  
The Center for Food Integrity  
(816) 556-3134  
mark.crouser@foodintegrity.org

## **Expert Panel Addresses Hidden Camera Investigation at Wyoming Swine Farm**

**KANSAS CITY, MO (May 9, 2012)** – The Animal Care Review Panel, a panel of animal well-being experts, created to analyze undercover video investigations at livestock farms, calls animal mistreatment seen in a recently released case from a Wyoming hog farm “unacceptable and indefensible.” The Center for Food Integrity (CFI) created the panel of animal well-being experts to examine video and provide their expertise for food retailers, the pork industry and the media, as well as other sectors of animal agriculture as they show interest.

The panel that examined the recent video from Wyoming was comprised of Dr. Temple Grandin, Colorado State University; Dr. Candace Croney, Purdue University; and Dr. John Deen, University of Minnesota.

Their report follows:

“There’s definitely abusive animal handling shown in that video,” said Grandin. “Kicking and throwing piglets? This farm definitely has management issues. A well-run operation would not be doing these kinds of things.”

“This video was an incredibly disturbing, saddening and horrific example of the worst kind of animal handling,” said Croney. “What I saw is the antithesis of every professional standard for animal care and handling published in any industry guideline or any certification program. I cannot imagine that anyone in the swine industry who considers themselves a responsible actor could support what is seen in that video. The handling of the animals shown is scientifically and morally indefensible.”

“It’s unacceptable,” said Deen. “It’s not consistent with handling practices in training programs that have been created and with expectations by the farming community. The actions seen in this video are abusive to the pigs and unacceptable to society as a whole.”

Croney cited specific instances of animals being kicked, and piglets being picked up by one ear and tossed significant distances as examples of unacceptable animal care. Deen cited a scene showing a sow unable to get to a water source as an example of the need for timely and humane euthanasia. Grandin noted veterinary care should have been provided a sow seen with a necrotic prolapse.



The experts noted the video was comprised of brief excerpts and that being allowed to view unedited footage might possibly have allowed them to place the case in better context.

“But there is no context I can think of that would make the egregious handling seen in this video acceptable,” said Croney. “If what is captured in this video is an accurate portrayal of what’s going on at this farm, there are so many different people complicit in abusive handling that it strongly suggests there is a culture in this particular facility of absolute indifference to the animals. It totally contradicts all the hard work and efforts of those in the industry who are committed to providing quality animal care. That kind of attitude has to be corrected from the top down. They need to look very carefully at what’s happening on their farm – who they’re selecting to work there, what sort of education they’re offering their people, and make a concerted effort to correct all of the problems that were clearly evident in that video.”

“I’m not making excuses for this farm because we’ve got to do a better job,” said Deen. “But sometimes when these farms are in remote locations it’s difficult to have people who recognize pig farming as a complex and responsible activity. Hog farm workers need to understand right from wrong and when they see things that aren’t consistent with good animal care they need to let somebody know.”

Grandin noted that undercover video obtained from an Iowa hog farm that was reviewed by the panel in February did not show any animal mistreatment.

“That farm obviously has worked with their employees on the proper way to handle pigs,” said Grandin. “The owners of this facility need to get much better management.”

### **About the Panel**

Hidden camera investigations at livestock farms have heightened public attention on animal care issues. In an effort to foster a more balanced conversation and provide credible feedback to promote continuous improvement in farm animal care, CFI created the Animal Care Review Panel.

The Panel operates independently. Its reviews, assessments, recommendations and reports will not be submitted to the pork industry for review or approval. CFI’s only role is to facilitate the review process and release the Panel’s findings.

CFI attempts to receive complete and in-context video footage from the organization that obtained it. This provides the best opportunity for the Panel to have a full understanding of the situation. Short of that, the Panel will review edited segments that have been released to the public.



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The opinions expressed in the review are solely those of the Panel.

### **About our Experts**

#### **Dr. Temple Grandin** **Colorado State University**

Dr. Temple Grandin is one of the most noted experts in animal behavior and animal welfare. She is a bestselling author and consultant to the livestock industry. Dr. Grandin is a professor of animal science at Colorado State University and also designs livestock handling facilities. She has authored over 400 articles in both scientific journals and livestock periodicals on animal handling, welfare, and facility design.

#### **Dr. Candace Croney** **Purdue University**

Dr. Candace Croney is a renowned expert in applied animal behavior, with an emphasis on animal learning, welfare and ethics. She is an associate professor of animal sciences at Purdue University. She has contributed to nationwide animal welfare efforts working with organizations such as the American Zoo and Aquarium Association and many others. She is on the Scientific Advisory Committee of the American Humane Certified program, and her research on farm animal cognition has been featured in national and international broadcast programs.

#### **Dr. John Deen** **University of Minnesota**

Dr. John Deen is a professor in veterinary epidemiology at the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Minnesota. His work in research, teaching and extension has been in welfare, epidemiology and economics, focusing on measurement and optimization across competing needs in pig farming. He provides training to farmers, veterinarians, and veterinary students. Dr. Deen is also project lead with USAID in reducing the threats of spread of disease from animals to humans, particularly in central Africa and Southeast Asia. He earned his DVM and PhD from the University of Guelph and gained board certification in swine health management from the American College of Veterinary Practitioners in 1994.

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